

**Testimony of Connecticut Fund for the Environment, Rivers Alliance, Audubon  
Connecticut, Connecticut League of Conservation Voters, Connecticut Forest & Park  
Association, and 1000 Friends of Connecticut**

**Raised Bill 199** AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT and **OPPOSING RB 198** AN ACT REQUIRING A TWO-THIRDS VOTE TO ENACT MUNICIPAL MANDATES

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The above organizations support including the concept of directing state resources toward developments that promote the principles of smart growth contained in Public Act 09-230 as part of Raised Bill 199. CFE also supports a strong Plan of Conservation of Development that gives meaning to both "State Plan" and "Conservation and Development."

The State has scarce and limited resources, be they monetary or natural. We must invest and utilize those resources wisely, in ways that benefit all the states citizens today and in the future. We cannot continue to develop blindly and haphazardly. Smart investment is critical to Connecticut's ability to adapt in today's economy.

State investment should be directed toward developments, projects, and acquisitions that reinvigorate Connecticut's economy and urban centers, connect people to their workplaces and keep Connecticut a great place to live and do business.

To do this, each state agency would develop a grading scale that incorporates the principles of smart growth as defined in Section 1 of Public Act 09-230 into its decision-making criteria in requesting and spending state bond commission allocations. Each agency would then prioritize projects that are scored as more consistent with the principles of smart growth, over projects that are scored as less consistent with the principles of smart growth.

Further, when state agencies submit requests for financing for a specific project to the bonding subcommittee of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly, the Office of Policy and Management would determine the extent to which the project is consistent with the principles of smart growth.

The Office of Policy and Management, like the agencies, should develop a Smart Growth Ranking System which would be used to apply a smart growth ranking to the project. The Office of Policy and Management would provide this smart growth ranking to the bonding subcommittee of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly, which would consider the smart growth ranking as compared to smart growth rankings given to other projects submitted by the same state agency in its determination of whether to grant the agency's request for bond funding for the project.

In general the ranking scales developed by the agencies and the Office of Policy and Management would allocate more points to:

- transportation projects that lower vehicle miles travelled and reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- economic development investments that create net new green jobs, include rail as a key supply chain component, and are proximate to rail and bus transit;
- real estate developments that clean-up brownfields in urban centers, within ½ mile of fixed route transit, within safe walking distance to major regional job centers and preserve natural resources and farms;
- and would allocate fewer points to projects that increase VMT and impinge on open space, natural resources and farmland.

This legislature, indeed this committee, defined smart growth last year. Now the committee should invest smartly and give life to the term smart growth. Our organizations strongly urge the Committee to include the above principles in determining which projects receive state funding. We also supports legislation that creates a strong State Plan of Conservation and Development that result in smart development and wise use of the state's natural resources.

Our organizations also **oppose Senate Bill 198** as an unnecessary, unwise, and ineffective restriction on the legislature's ability to act. One need only look at California's experience with super-majority requirements to understand how completely such measures can incapacitate a state's ability to act.